

BOOK REVIEW

IRWIN M. BRODO, SYLVIA DURAN SHARNOFF, and STEPHEN SHARNOFF. 2001. **Lichens of North America**. (ISBN 0-300-08249-5, hbk.). Yale University Press, 302 Temple Street, P.O. Box 209040, New Haven, CT 06520-9040, U.S.A. (Orders: 203-432-0960, 203-432-0948 fax). \$69.95, 795 pp, 924 color photos, distribution maps, 9 1/2" × 11".

This recently published magnum opus *Lichens of North America* is a beautiful volume that treats an often overlooked group of organisms. And this book has everything! The book is divided into two parts. The first part begins with introductory material including a wonderful description of the symbiotic relationships that lichens form and moves on to discuss lichen morphology, anatomy, reproduction, physiology, chemistry, ecology and biogeography. Two chapters describe how humans have found uses for lichens and how we may use them as environmental indicators. There are also two chapters offering very practical information on how to describe and classify lichens and how to collect and preserve them for future study. The final chapter in the first part of the book provides useful information about how to use the maps, keys and descriptions in the second half of the book.

The second part of this volume provides easy to follow keys, well-crafted descriptions, beautiful photographs, and very useful range maps for 805 species of lichens. The photographs and range maps should make this volume extremely useful for anyone interested in lichens whether they be professionals or avocational enthusiasts. A comprehensive glossary in the back of the book provides a most welcome guide to the terminology associated with a group of organisms about which many people know very little.

The introductory text in this book is extremely well written and immensely readable. And the photographs are simply works of art. This captivating and thoroughly engrossing book should be on the shelf of everyone who loves nature, and can appreciate the wonderful diversity to be found even in one of the least well-known and overlooked groups of organisms. It will surely inspire many of us to take a closer look the next time we see a lichen.—*Debra Trock, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 509 Pecan Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102-4060, U.S.A.*